

Inspection of Northmoor Academy

Alderson Street, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL9 6AQ

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 September 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The executive principal of this school is Sarah Taylor. This school is part of The Harmony Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Antony Hughes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew McCully.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's vision of 'believe, succeed, achieve' permeates all aspects of school life. Staff consistently display these qualities through their interactions with pupils. This vision inspires pupils to work towards success. Pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. The school has created an oasis for pupils. Pupils know that they are cared for well. Northmoor Academy is a friendly and happy place to learn.

The school has established an exciting curriculum for pupils to study. This motivates pupils when learning something for the first time or mastering a new skill. Pupils are rightly proud of their work. They know that what they learn now will help them in the future. Pupils extend their skills by taking on many leadership roles within the school. These roles inspire pupils to contribute to their school community.

Staff have consistently high expectations of behaviour and routines. Pupils rise to these expectations. Their conduct is exemplary. The school makes sure that pupils and families know the importance of being in school regularly. Pupils enjoy their learning and want to attend school. As a result, attendance is improving. The school has a highly inclusive school culture that celebrates the diverse community that the school serves. Pupils treat everyone around them with the utmost respect.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has established an ambitious curriculum that supports all pupils. In most subjects, learning is well considered and builds on what pupils already know and can do. For example, pupils use their prior learning about living things to decide whether an unknown object is living or not. However, in other subjects, the important concepts and ideas that pupils need to learn have not been identified clearly enough. From time to time, a few pupils struggle to connect their learning to these important concepts. Some of these pupils find it hard to build on their prior learning in these subject areas.

Overall, current pupils' achievement is much better than the published data suggests. In part, this is because some pupils join the school part way through key stage 2. Many of these pupils start school without the knowledge and skills appropriate to their age. However, these pupils achieve well from their starting points.

Pupils who arrive at the school at different times of the academic year settle quickly. Staff carefully check what these pupils know and can do. The school makes sure that each of these pupils receives the support that they need. For example, those pupils who speak English as an additional language receive tailored support that helps them to quickly master English.

Reading is a priority across all year groups. The school ensures that all staff have the training that they need to help pupils to become confident readers. In the early years, children confidently master new sounds. Children enjoy sharing a book with an adult. Across the school, adults share stories that inspire pupils to read. Pupils with special

educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have appropriate support to help them to become fluent readers. Some pupils have a limited range of language. This includes some pupils with SEND and pupils across the school who are at an earlier stage in the development of their language and communication skills. The school is ambitious for pupils to learn important new vocabulary. However, these ambitions are not fully realised in practice.

Children in early years begin to learn the value of number and make simple calculations, right from when they start school. For example, staff use rhymes to help children to understand one more and one less. This helps children to become confident in performing different calculations. Across the school, pupils have lots of opportunities to rehearse and repeat their learning. Pupils use this knowledge to help them to solve mathematical problems successfully.

Pupils understand difference and diversity. They recognise that they might hold differing opinions but that everyone deserves respect. This informs the deeply respectful way in which pupils treat everyone around them. Pupils spoke with maturity about issues such as healthy relationships and staying safe online. The school deliberately broadens pupils' experiences. For example, some pupils participate in choirs, others perform at the Bridgewater Hall. In key stage 2, pupils participate in a Shakespeare festival. All pupils benefit from an impressive range of author visits. These experiences bring the curriculum alive for pupils.

Trustees and those responsible for governance check that the school is taking the right action in the best interests of all pupils. The trust provides effective support and professional development for staff at all levels. Staff who are new to the profession flourish due to this support. The workload and well-being of all staff is a priority. The school makes sure that staff have the support that they need to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Staff are proud to work in this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's ambition for pupils to develop their vocabulary is not fully realised in practice. Some children in the early years, older pupils who are earlier in their language development and some pupils with SEND, do not develop the range of vocabulary that they should. The school should ensure that staff are fully equipped to support pupils to acquire this important vocabulary.
- The important knowledge that pupils require has not been identified clearly enough in a few subject areas. Some pupils struggle to connect new knowledge to broader concepts. This limits what they can remember. The school should make sure that, in

these subjects, teachers are clear about the important knowledge that pupils should acquire in readiness for future learning.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	142412
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10348324
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	323
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew McCully
CEO of the trust	Antony Hughes
Executive Principal	Sarah Taylor
Website	www.northmoor.theharmonytrust.org
Date of previous inspection	8 and 9 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is an above average-sized primary school.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider for a small number of pupils.
- The school runs a breakfast club and a range of after-school clubs for pupils in the school.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school’s education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the trust board body, including the chair of trust. The lead inspector also held a meeting with the CEO and the director of education of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, history, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of other documentation, including minutes from the meetings of governors and leaders’ evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors also spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life.
- To gather parents’ views, inspectors took account of the responses from the Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also met with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors met formally with staff to gather their views.

Inspection team

Jen Sloan, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

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